

REMARKS

Reconsideration of this application is respectfully requested in view of the foregoing amendments and the following remarks.

By the foregoing amendments, claims 6 and 11 have been amended and claims 1, 7-9 and 21 have been canceled without prejudice or disclaimer. Thus, claims 4, 6, 10, 11, 14, 16, 18 and 20 are currently pending in the application and subject to examination.

As a preliminary matter, Applicant takes the opportunity to thank the Examiner for indicating that claims 4, 6, 10, 11, 14, 16, 18 and 20 are allowable.

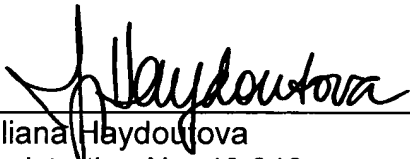
In the Office Action mailed May 4, 2004, the Examiner objected to claims 1, 6, 8, 9, 11, 16 and 21 for informalities. Claims 1, 8, 9 and 21 have been canceled. Claims 6 and 11 have been amended responsive to the objection. The amendments made to claims 6 and 11 are cosmetic in nature and do not narrow the scope of the claims. Claim 16 has been correctly labeled Previously Presented. Applicant respectfully requests withdrawal of the objections.

The Examiner rejected claims 1, 7-9 and 21 under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 6,252,442 to Malherbe. Claims 1, 7-9 and 21 are also rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 6,078,201 to Crotty. Claim 7 was further rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 6,362,669 to Zhou, et al. Claims 1, 7-9 and 21 have been canceled without prejudice or disclaimer, and therefore, the rejections with respect to these claims are now moot.

Accordingly, Applicant submits that the application is now in condition for allowance and an issuance of a Notice of Allowance is earnestly solicited. Should the Examiner determine that any further action is necessary to place this application into better form, the Examiner is encouraged to telephone the undersigned representative at the number listed below.

In the event this paper is not considered to be timely filed, the Applicant hereby petitions for an appropriate extension of time. The Commissioner is hereby authorized to charge any fee deficiency or credit any overpayment associated with this communication to Deposit Account No. 01-2300, referring to client-matter number 108397-00025.

Respectfully submitted,



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